



**General Certificate of Education
June 2011**

Classical Civilisation 2020

CIV4D: Tiberius and Claudius

Report on the Examination

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CIV4D Tiberius and Claudius

General Comments

The vast majority of candidates entered for this option showed some degree of knowledge, ranging from adequate to substantial, whilst just a few struggled to demonstrate more than a patchy amount. There was too often a lack of precision in the short answers, although many candidates scored high, or even full, marks. Skills for answering questions carrying 10 marks have improved, the best responses showing a balance between, on the one hand, analysis and evaluation and, on the other, illustrations of knowledge. There was a tendency in less successful 20-mark answers towards either narration of details without robust evaluation or evaluation of a general nature, without illustration. The best 40-mark essays were sophisticated, fully synoptic and packed with relevant detail. Lower down the scale were many competent attempts. A minority of candidates found it difficult to finish well in the limited time available, some doing this question first, sometimes to the detriment of their other answers. Spelling and punctuation were often poor, even by otherwise talented candidates. Overall, nonetheless, virtually all candidates showed some appreciation of what they had studied.

Candidates were divided fairly equally between Options A and B, but in Section Two Option C was by slightly more popular than Option D.

Section One

Option A

The range and precision of knowledge displayed in the short questions was variable. In response to Question 01 many gave incomplete definitions of 'Triumph', omitting the information that Triumphs were awarded to victorious generals. On the other hand, the second half of Question 01 was accurately answered by many and Question 02 was well done. Too many candidates limited themselves to a few basic details such as Tacfarinas' use of guerrilla tactics in Question 03. Better answers supplied fuller details, but there was little evaluation of how serious a threat Tacfarinas posed.

Weaker answers to Question 04 skimmed on evaluation and often struggled to supply much illustrative material. On the other hand, examiners also saw many good, well-organised essays which gave the sort of chronological framework onto which could be hung arguments about how significant Sejanus was, his influence, for example peaking from the time of Tiberius' retirement to Capri in AD27 until AD 31. Some careless answers ascribed all *maiestas* trials to Sejanus.

Option B

Questions 05, 06 and 07 were not well answered, with many candidates confusing the answers to Questions 06 and 07. Again, many candidates limited themselves to a few basic details such as Messalina's marriage to Silius and Agrippina's ambitions for her son Nero in response to Question 08. Better answers supplied fuller details, for example, Messallina's victims, notably Asiaticus and Poppaea. There was little evaluation of how significant an effect Claudius' wives had.

Weaker answers to Question 09 again skimmed on evaluation and often struggled to supply much illustrative material but, again, there were also, many good, well-organised essays. Many candidates gave details on Claudius' remedies for ensuring Rome's corn supplies, his edicts,

the building of the harbour at Ostia and the invasion of Britain, but fewer developed strong evaluative arguments.

Section Two

Option C

For synoptic essays candidates should develop coherent arguments, looking at the question's widest aspects. Those who chose to answer Question 10 often found difficult to address the synoptic element, some resorting to straight discussion of 'good' and 'bad' emperors when they should have been discussing the 'strengths and weaknesses of the imperial system' *per se*, such as the emperor's central overriding power and control of a huge empire. Those who did understand the thrust of the question produced interesting work.

Option D

A common fault in responses to Question 11 was a tendency to write about Tacitus and Suetonius, their backgrounds, genre and sources, which some did in great detail, without providing many specific examples in support of arguments. One frequent error was to refer to Claudius' 'creation of a civil service', which is a modern concept.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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